

Grade 12 English

Critical Reading and College Writing

Benjamin Clark

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Office Hours: Monday-Friday 7:20-7:50 a.m. and 2:20-4:00

Course Content:

This course focuses on modern and contemporary fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Students will learn to read critically and write effectively in a variety of genres. A major component of the course is the Senior Project which allows students to choose a topic, research it, and create a product based on their future academic, career, or personal goals. Texts may include: *Brave New World*, *The Life of Pi*, *Cat's Eye*, *The Essay Connection*, *The Best American Short Stories of the 20th Century*, *Sound and Sense*, and *Heath Grammar and Mechanics*.

Course Objectives:

Students will expand their skills of literary analysis, self-expression, language use, reading, writing, and communication.

Students will read widely and deeply and improve their ability to make connections between texts and their own experiences and observations.

Students will be able to read and understand a variety of non-fiction texts written at a college level.

Students will complete a significant self-directed senior project that is based on the student's own interests and goals and that requires planning, research, reading, writing, and presentation skills.

Course Requirements:

Assigned reading: Students will read and critically examine various major works such as *Life of Pi*, *Brave New World*, *Grendel*, and *Macbeth* and others. They will also read a wide variety of shorter non-fiction pieces, both as a whole class and as part of their senior project.

Writing: Students will write several forms of non-fiction over the year, working on improving their individual writing weaknesses, effectively creating a clear thesis, and using evidence to support that position. Students will also write a college application essay.

Class discussions and oral participation: Students will contribute to and lead discussions. They will also present, perform, and be interviewed on a variety of topics.

Vocabulary: Students will pass various tests of SAT words and literary terms.

Final exams and final projects: Students will compile their best writing at the end of each semester. They will also pass an essay exam designed to test mastery. The students will also design, create, and present a Senior Project.

Evaluation:

Formal writing/ major projects:	25%
(Journal, book reports, final drafts of essays)	

Homework/ informal writing:	10%
(Daily work, drafts of essays, discussion boards)	

Oral language	10%
(Group work, peer editing, mini-presentations)	

Use of English in the Classroom	10%
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Tests/ quizzes:	10%
(Unit tests, vocabulary tests and quizzes.)	

Senior Project:	35%
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Summer Assignment (First Quarter Only)	22%
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With the exception of the summer assignment and the senior project, late work will be accepted up to three days. Each day the percentage drops 15%. If possible, work should be submitted via email.

Essays, in any draft, will not be accepted without your personal grammar sheet and your writing log.

Course Rules:

Respect yourself, each other, the teacher, and the learning environment.

All instances of plagiarism will be punished according to the school rules. It is your responsibility to read and understand these rules.

You must speak English and only English from the time you enter the classroom until you leave the classroom, in all situations, including group discussion. You may earn up to ten percent of your quarter grade by only speaking English. Any time you speak another language, you will lose one of those points.

Please come and talk to me if you have any problems or concerns about your performance in the class.

Materials

1. A 3-Ring Binder that is used ONLY for your Senior Project.
2. A notebook/composition book for journal writing.
3. A positive, cheerful attitude (last time I checked, they are out of stock on this item at Office Depot, so you will have to create your own.